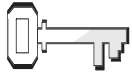


The Bright Light



References

Matthew 17:1-13;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 419–425



Memory Verse

“Rejoice in the Lord
always. I will say
it again: Rejoice!”
(Philippians 4:4, NIV).

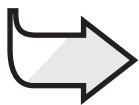


Objectives

The children will:
Know that worship
is rejoicing in
God’s presence.

Feel the joy of worship.

Respond by expressing the joy of
worship in their own way.



The Message

Worship is
rejoicing in
God’s presence.

Monthly Theme

Worship makes us joyful every day.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus leads Peter, James, and John up a high mountain, where Jesus is transfigured in (covered with) dazzling light before the three disciples. Moses and Elijah appear and talk with Jesus. Peter is so excited that he offers to build three shelters—one each for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus. God’s voice is heard in a bright cloud, frightening the disciples, who fall to the ground. Before long, the light fades and Jesus is alone with His disciples again. As they go back down the mountain, Jesus tells them not to tell what they have seen until after His resurrection.

This is a lesson about worship.

The Transfiguration was a brief glimpse of who Jesus really was—Almighty God. It was an awesome affirmation from God the Father of what Jesus had done and was about to do for the human race. Reverent, joyous worship is the only adequate human response to God’s presence and love.

Teacher Enrichment

“Just as God’s voice in the cloud over Mount Sinai gave authority to his law (Exodus 19:9), God’s voice at the transfiguration gave authority to Jesus’ words” (*Life Application Bible [NIV]*, p. 1569).

The appearance of both Elijah and Moses was consistent with the Messianic expectations of the Jews, who believed that Elijah would appear, accompanied by Moses.

“The disciples are confident that Moses and Elijah have been sent to protect their Master, and to establish His authority as king.

“But before the crown must come the cross. Not the inauguration of Christ as king, but the decease to be accomplished at Jerusalem, is the subject of their conference with Jesus. . . . Heaven had sent its messengers to Jesus; not angels, but men who had endured suffering and sorrow, and who could sympathize with the Saviour. . . . Moses and Elijah . . . had shared His longing for the salvation of men. . . . These men, chosen above every angel around the throne, had come to commune with Jesus concerning the scenes of His suffering, and to comfort Him with the assurance of the sympathy of heaven. The hope of the world, the salvation of every human being, was the burden of their interview” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 422, 425).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 9.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Millions of Lights</i> B. <i>Shining in the Dark</i>	two mirrors, candle, matches, Bible small ball covered in aluminum foil, flashlight, Bible
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Story Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> candle and/or flashlight, matches, container representing where offering goes Prayer Diary, candle and matches, flashlight
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	white sheet on line or frame, three Bible-times costumes, bright floodlight, recorded "voice of God" Bible Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>Shhh! Listen!</i> B. <i>Joy in Worship Response</i>	whistle, cassette tape or CD of quiet worship music, cassette or CD player, Bible small comb and 4" x 4" piece of waxed paper or tissue paper for each child
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>"I Worship God" Mobile</i>	small paper plate or 6" circle of heavy paper per student, string or yarn, construction paper, markers, scissors

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Ask them if they would like to share anything from their Bible lesson this past week. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- two mirrors
- one candle
- matches
- Bible

A. Millions of Lights

Set the mirrors perpendicular to each other and turn off the lights. Light the candle and hold it near the mirrors. Enjoy the multiple reflections that will appear in the mirrors. Unless the mirrors are quite large, the children may need to sit so they can look into one or both of the mirrors.

Debriefing

Read aloud Psalm 89:15, 16. **What would the mirror look like if the candle wasn't lit?** (dark) **How do you feel when you see all the lights?** (brighter, happy, like it) **What can we learn about God and ourselves and worship from this activity?** (God is the light; when we worship Him, we enjoy Jesus' light; light makes us rejoice.) **Our story today tells about a time Jesus' disciples saw a very bright light that brought them great joy. Today's message is . . .**



WORSHIP IS REJOICING IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- small ball
- aluminum foil
- flashlight
- Bible

B. Shining in the Dark

Cover the ball with aluminum foil. Turn off all the lights and look at the ball. Say: **Is it glowing?** (no) Say: **But when you shine the flashlight on it, it reflects the light around the room.** Demonstrate.

Debriefing

Read aloud 2 Corinthians 3:18. Ask: **When we worship God, what good things happen to us?** (He fills our hearts with happiness.) Read aloud Philippians 4:4. **If we are to rejoice all the time, what else will we also be doing at the same time?** (worshiping) **Our story today tells about a time Jesus' disciples saw a very bright light that brought them great joy. Today's message is . . .**



WORSHIP IS REJOICING IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the children's joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing favorite experiences from last week's lesson study. Give a special warm greeting to visitors and introduce each by name. Acknowledge birthdays or special events.



Suggested Songs

"Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 12)

"Come Into His Presence" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 14)

"Philippians 4:4 [Rejoice in the Lord Always]" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 23)

"Alleluia" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 16)

"His Banner Over Me Is Love" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 25)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Collect the offering in a container that represents the part of the world where the offering is going this quarter. Keep a candle burning through offering time. Say: **We can help God spread the light of His love by giving our offering to support missions.**

You Need:

- offering container
- flashlight or candle and matches



Prayer

Before prayer, discuss the children's need to let Jesus make their lives shine as His did. Light a candle (eyes open!) or turn on a flashlight as you pray. Write in your class "Prayer Diary" requests, concerns, and answers. Then invite the children to take turns praying for someone whose life is in darkness now.

You Need:

- Prayer Diary
- candle and matches or flashlight

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- three adults or teens, recorded “voice of God”
- a white sheet on a line or frame
- three Bible-times costumes
- a bright floodlight

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Jesus, Moses, Elijah, voice of God

Setting the scene: Stretch out a white sheet on a line or frame up front, and 2 yards (2 meters) from the wall. Dress the three people who will stand behind the sheet. Position a bright floodlight to shine behind them, throwing their silhouette on the sheet. Turn the light on and off at the appropriate place in the story.

Prerecord the voice, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” (Matthew 17:5, NIV).

Read or tell the story.

At the end of a busy day, the disciples are getting ready to rest. You can be the disciples. Get comfortable in your chairs. But just as you are settling down, Jesus calls to three of you—Peter, James, and John. “Come, go with Me up the mountain,” He says.

Would you go? Of course. So you follow Jesus up the mountain.

At the top, you wonder why Jesus brought you here. But suddenly you stare at Jesus. *[Gesture toward the sheet.]* You forget everything else as Jesus changes before your eyes *[floodlight on]*.

A dazzling light from heaven falls on Jesus. His face glows as bright as sunlight bouncing off a piece of glass. His clothes look like brand-new satin robes, fit for a king. The shadows of the folds glow with rainbow colors. The light is so bright that you cannot move. You dare not blink for fear of missing something.

And then, you see two men, also bright with light. They just stand there

talking with Jesus. Somehow you think you know who they are.

“Elijah? Moses?” you murmur in wonder. Then you know without a doubt that indeed Elijah and Moses have come. They talk to Jesus.

What a strange and wonderful thing is happening right before your staring eyes! It’s so wonderful that it is too good to be true! Peter feels that he will burst if he doesn’t do something to celebrate. What can he do to express his joy?

“Lord, it’s good to be here!” Peter’s voice is breathless with excitement. “Do You want us to build three shelters? One for You, one for Elijah, and one for Moses?”

While he is speaking, a bright cloud comes down over everything. Brilliant light turns the moisture droplets of the cloud into a million diamonds. They dance with rainbow lights. And out of this dazzling beauty the voice of God speaks. *[Play prerecorded “voice of God.”]*

“This is My Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” (Matthew 17:5, NIV). The voice is loud and deep. It shakes the mountain.

You disciples fall to the ground, frightened. You shut your eyes. *[Turn floodlight off.]*

But the next thing you know, Jesus is touching you lightly. *[Walk among the children; touch each one on the shoulder.]*

“Get up,” Jesus says. “There’s nothing to be afraid of.” *[Children stand, look around.]*

You sit up and rub your eyes. Peter and John are getting up. Moses and Elijah are gone. The light has faded. Jesus leads you back down the mountain.

“Don’t tell anyone what you saw tonight—not until after I am risen from the dead,” Jesus tells you.

As you walk back to meet the other disciples, you know that as long as you

live, you will never forget the glory of Jesus' transfiguration, when He stood in the bright light. You will always remember the glory you witnessed and how thrilled you were to be in God's presence.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Why do you think Jesus took only three disciples up the mountain?** Have someone read Mark 14:32, 33. The three He chose—Peter, James, and John—would witness His struggle in Gethsemane. The memory of the Transfiguration would comfort them then (see *The Desire of Ages*, p. 420).

What would you want to do if you saw Jesus with two world-famous leaders? Did Peter ever build three shelters? Why? (No, because Jesus told them not to tell others what they had seen.) **What do we do when we rejoice in God's presence?** (sing, pray, tell others, help others, give offerings, etc.) **Let's remember our message:**



WORSHIP IS REJOICING IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Form two groups and teach the memory verse as outlined below. Option: Teach or use the song "Philippians 4:4 [Rejoice in the Lord Always]" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 23) sung as a round.

All	Rejoice
Group 1	in the Lord always.
Group 2	I will say it again:
All	Rejoice!
All	Philippians 4:4

Bible Study

Say: **Today is Sabbath, a special day set aside by God for you to worship Him along with others who also**

love God. You have come to church, a special place set aside for you to worship God. God has given you this special day and place so that you can really listen to Him and concentrate on the joy of worshipping Him.

When we worship God, we will be joyful, sometimes silent, and always reverent. ("Reverent" means "showing honor or respect.") Let's use our Bibles to learn some more about how to worship God.

Form four groups with an adult helper for each. Assign the following Bible references, one to each group.

Hebrews 12:28

Worship God with thankfulness, reverence, and awe.

Psalms 16:11; 21:6; 89:15, 16

King David finds joy in God's presence.

Habakkuk 2:20; Psalm 46:10

Keep silence in God's presence.

Leviticus 19:30; 26:2

Observe God's Sabbath and respect His church.

Debriefing

Ask: **When you worship God, how can you be joyful, silent, and reverent at the same time?** (These are all parts of worshipping God. For example, in church we joyfully praise Him by singing during part of the worship service. We also have a listening time when we open our minds to hear what He wants to tell us through the Scripture reading and sermon. Throughout the whole worship time we are reverent, knowing that we are in the presence of an awesome God.) **Let's remember our message:**



WORSHIP IS REJOICING IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

You Need:

- Bibles

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- a whistle
- a cassette tape or CD of quiet worship music
- a cassette or CD player
- Bible

A. Shhh! Listen!

Divide the children into three groups. Whisper secret instructions to each group. Tell the first group to sing “If You’re Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands,” or something similar, as loudly as they can; tell the second group to talk loudly about their favorite food; tell the third group to do 30 jumping jacks (or jump up and down), counting loudly while they jump. Then shout “Go!” and let the chaos begin. After 30 seconds blow your whistle and call time.

Debriefing

Ask: **Can anyone in groups one and three tell me what the people in group two were talking about?** (Most children won’t know.) **Why can’t you tell me what they were saying?** (There was too much other noise.)

Ask someone to read aloud Matthew 17:5. Say: **This verse tells us to listen to Jesus. What must we do to listen to Jesus, our God? Let’s read Psalm 46:10 together.** Allow time to find the text. Adult helpers assist as needed. **Yes, we must be still (quiet) to listen for God. We are often too busy talking and doing other things to listen to Him. Right now we are going to take some quiet time for God.**

Find a place in this room where you can be alone. Sit down, close your eyes, and say, “Be quiet and know that I am God.” I’ll play soft music to help you concentrate on our wonderful God. Think about how happy you are that He is with you

right now. When the music stops, come back here.

When the children have settled down, play two to three minutes of worshipful music. Then stop the music and call the children back together. (Adapted from Lisa Flinn and Barbara Younger, *Making Scripture Stick* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Books, 1992], pp. 114, 115.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel while spending quiet time in God’s presence? Were you happy? Where can you spend quiet time with God when you are home? Allow response time. How could you spend quiet time with God when you are at school? Is it always necessary to be alone to praise God? When might you want to worship God with your family? With your friends? If you were happy in your quiet place, you were worshipping God, for . . .**



WORSHIP IS REJOICING IN GOD’S PRESENCE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- a small comb for each child
- 4” x 4” piece of waxed paper or tissue paper for each comb

B. Joy in Worship Response

Distribute the combs and the 4” x 4” pieces of waxed paper or tissue paper to cover the top and sides of each comb.

Ask the children to hum the tune, “Philippians 4:4 [Rejoice in the Lord Always]” (*Sing for Joy*, No. 23) through their comb instruments. When they know the tune, suggest that they sing it, adapt-

ing the words to fit today's memory verse (Philippians 4:4, NIV).

When they know the song well enough, play the combs and sing it as a round.

Debriefing

Say: **How can you rejoice in the Lord always? Does that mean that if you get hurt, you should say, "Praise the Lord, I am hurt"?** (No, but

we should always praise God for the good He will bring out of our problems. We should praise Him for being with us while we are going through our problems.) **Let's rejoice that He is always with us, no matter what. Remember today's message? Say it with me:**



WORSHIP IS REJOICING IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

4

Sharing the Lesson

"I Worship God" Mobile

Give a paper plate or a 6-inch (15-cm) circle cut from heavy paper or light cardboard to each child. Help them write "I Worship God" on the plate/circle. Have the children cut six smaller circles or triangles on which they write action words that tell what they do when they worship, such as: sing, pray, listen, rejoice, be thankful, express love, be kind, etc. Attach the small circles/triangles to the paper plate or cardboard with string or yarn and let the children take the mobiles home.

Older students can take the mobile a step further by attaching another shape to the small circles/triangles. On these can be written specific ways to do the action. For example, they could add to "sing"—hymns, prayers; to "pray"—praise, requests, thanks, confession; to "listen"—sermons, God, authorities; to "rejoice"—sing, clap, smile; to "be thankful"—to God, to family, to friends; to "be kind"—to people, to pets, to the unloved.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many of you know someone who needs more joy in their lives? Ask for a show of hands. What can you do to bring joy to those people this week, so that they can also enjoy Jesus' presence as you do?**

Encourage the children to find moments this coming week to sing and pray and share the joyful actions displayed on their mobile with the person(s) they thought of.

Say: **As you go to the worship service now (or go home), remember that ...** (Say the message together.)



WORSHIP IS REJOICING IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

Closing

Stand in a circle, holding hands, and sing the following prayer to God: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 1). Then pray that all present will reverently worship God with joy and listen for His words in the church service.

You Need:

- small paper plate or 6" circle of heavy paper per student
- string or yarn
- construction paper
- markers
- scissors

The Bright Light

References

Matthew 17:1-13;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 419–425

Memory Verse

“Rejoice in the Lord
always. I will say it
again: Rejoice!”
(Philippians 4:4,
NIV).

The Message

Worship is rejoicing
in God’s presence.

Did you ever sleep outdoors? Sleeping out is fun—if you have moonlight to see by, or have a flashlight. But being out in the dark can be scary. Once three of Jesus’ disciples saw a bright light at night. Do you think they were afraid?

Once, at the end of a busy day, the disciples were getting ready to rest. But Jesus said to Peter, James, and John, “Come, go with Me up the mountain.” And He led His three friends to the top of a nearby mountain.

The disciples may have wondered why Jesus took such a long hike at bedtime. They may even have wondered, *Why just us three?* But suddenly they were staring at Jesus. They forgot everything else as they saw Him change right before their eyes.



A dazzling light from heaven fell on Jesus. His face glowed as bright as sunlight bouncing off a piece of glass. His clothes looked like brand-new satin robes, fit for a king. The light was so bright that the three disciples could not move.

And then, they saw two men, also brightly lit, standing with Jesus. Maybe one was wearing a leather purse as Elijah had worn. Maybe the other carried a rod, as Moses did when leading the Israelites through the Red Sea.

“Elijah? Moses?” the disciples said in wonder. Then they knew without a doubt that indeed Elijah and Moses had come to encourage Jesus.

What a strange and wonderful thing was happening. It seemed too good to be true. Elijah and Moses had come to talk with Jesus! Peter felt that he would burst if he didn’t tell someone. What could he do to celebrate his joy for Jesus?

“Lord, it’s good to be here!” Peter’s voice was breathless with excitement. “Do You want us to build three shelters? One for You, one for Elijah, and one for Moses?”

Just then a bright cloud came over all of them. The cloud seemed as bright as a million diamonds dancing in rainbow colors.

And out of this dazzling beauty the voice of God spoke. “This is My Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” (Matthew 17:5, NIV). The voice, loud and deep, shook the mountain.

The three disciples fell to the ground. They may have thought, *Sinners like us do not belong in the presence of God.* And just like any human might, they shut their eyes tightly. What might happen in the presence of their holy God?

The next thing they knew, Jesus was touching them gently. “Get up,” He said. “There’s nothing to be afraid of.”

Peter, James, and John sat up and looked around. Moses and Elijah were gone. The light had faded. Jesus was telling them to walk with Him back down the mountain.

Maybe the disciples began to discuss what they had seen. But Jesus told them not to talk about it. "Tell no one," He said, " 'until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead' " (Matthew 17:9, NIV).

As they walked back to meet the other disciples, they asked Jesus many questions. He explained to them some of the things they did not understand. As long as they lived, they would never forget the glory they saw that night. They would always remember the joy and awe they felt. They would never forget that they had been in God's presence.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family find a quiet place and read the Bible lesson.
- Read the memory verse from the Bible (Philippians 4:4), then sing together "Rejoice in the Lord Always."
- Talk about ways you can have God's presence with you every day. Then thank Him for it.

Sunday

- During worship today read and discuss Matthew 17:1-8. Then read 2 Corinthians 3:18. Talk about ways you can "reflect the Lord's glory" this week.
- Sing together, "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 133). Pray that God will help you reflect His glory.
- Make 12 mountain peak-shaped cutouts. Color some light at the top of each. Write one word of your memory verse on each. Mix them up and try to put them in order. Save the "mountains" for another day.

Monday

- With your family, read Matthew 17:4 for worship today. How did Peter feel about being on the mountain with Jesus? Why do you think Peter wanted to build three shelters?
- Draw a picture of a beautiful church that you would like to build for God. Write your memory verse at the bottom. Thank God for your church.
- Start planning a special Friday night joyful family worship.

Tuesday

- During worship, ask each family member to tell about two things they are happy for. Read Matthew 17:5 together. What other time did God say these words about His Son? (See Matthew 3:17.)

- Continue planning for Friday evening's joyful worship.
- Sing the memory verse as a round. Find an instrument to play or spoons to tap together as you sing. Then thank God for happy family times.

Wednesday

- Tell the lesson story to your family during worship today. Arrange your mountain peak cutouts and say your memory verse. Tell about a time you saw beautiful clouds (sunset, sunrise, etc.).
- Count the lights in your home. Then thank God for light.

Thursday

- During worship today, read Matthew 17:1-3 together. Ask a family member to tell about a time Moses and Elijah were rejected. What might they have said to Jesus to encourage Him as He faced the cross? What can your family learn from Moses and Elijah? Ask each person to find a way to encourage someone today.
- Arrange your mountain peak cutouts and say your memory verse. Then sing it together.
- Finish planning for tomorrow's joyful family worship.

Friday

- Lead out in the joyful family worship that you have planned. Include saying or singing your memory verse and presenting your lesson story. Talk about what you will do to find joy in tomorrow's church worship service.
- Read Psalm 126:3 together. Write something in the "Blessings Book" that you started during last Friday evening's worship. Then sing "Rejoice in the Lord Always" and thank God for those blessings.